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Remarks

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block
during his acceptance of the chairmanship of the 22nd Conference of
the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in
Rome, Italy, Nov. 5.**

Director General Saouma, my fellow delegates, and friends.

It is with great pleasure that I accept the chairmanship of this Twenty-second Conference of FAO. Your selection of me as chairman is an honor both to my country and to me personally. I look forward to working with all of you during the course of this conference.

Four decades ago representatives of 44 countries gathered in the United States at a small town in the hills of Virginia. They met to consider how to achieve "freedom from want in relation to food and agriculture." They were living in a world far different from the one we live in today. It was a world at war. Millions were suffering and starving.

The men and women who met at Hot Springs, Virginia came together in the hope that such horror would one day be eliminated. They pledged their nations to create "a permanent organization in the field of food and agriculture" that would be a focal point for international efforts to end hunger.

Much has changed since FAO was first conceived. A hundred new nations have been born and world population has nearly doubled. But the fundamental goals of this organization have not changed. FAO has more than tripled in size to 152 members since its formal founding in 1945, but it is still working to achieve "freedom from want."

Reaching our goal of an end to hunger and malnutrition will not be easy. Read the report of the Hot Springs Conference today, and you will be struck by how many of the problems of 1943 still persist in the world of 1983. Our world has changed in some remarkable ways, but in others it has not.

After 40 years, it seems proper for us to review our efforts to bring an end to hunger and malnutrition. What have we accomplished? Where have we succeeded? Where have we failed?

FAO calculates that the average consumption of calories per person has in fact increased since 1960. That is a remarkable feat given the rapid climb we have seen in world population.

In most developing countries, the average amount of food produced per person has risen steadily since the 1950's, in spite of the fact that population has almost doubled. We have seen some good progress in Latin America, though the situation in the Andes is causing us great concern. There has also been substantial progress in East Asia.

Unfortunately, the food problems in Africa are tragic, particularly now, in this second year of severe drought. Per capita food production has been declining for some time, largely due to population growth.

Drought has now created a serious food emergency in Africa. Farmers in 23 countries with 225 million people face adverse conditions for production. About 9 million people face serious nutritional threats and starvation is occurring in some regions. The crisis in sub-Saharan Africa presents a clear challenge to us all.

So there can be no doubt that we still have a long way to go in our battle to end hunger. Nearly a half billion people are severely undernourished—this is a terrible measure of suffering.

How can we do better? Our answer to that question will determine whether or not this conference and this organization are successful.

We must be forthright in our discussions and consider both the economic and political barriers to overcoming hunger.

We must be practical and focus on what has a chance to work.

And we must be optimistic and creative to get the food production and distribution we need.

Time and again experience has demonstrated that good programs involve a government that cares about its people and is prepared to work with other countries on a basis which respects the individual farmer. There will be no solid or permanent progress unless our programs are based solidly on the talents and determination of the individual farmer.

Many of us here have worked the land ourselves and know the challenges of producing food and fiber. I suggest we keep those challenges in mind in all we do here in this conference.

We can be guided in our work by the following ideas set forth at the Hot Springs conference:

1. The first cause of hunger and malnutrition is poverty.
2. The primary responsibility lies with each nation for seeing that its own people have the food needed for life and health.
3. Freedom from want is difficult to achieve without concerted action among like-minded nations.

These thoughts can still give us direction as we seek to end the hunger and malnutrition that afflict so many. If our work in this conference reflects them, we will move closer to our goal of "freedom from want of food" for all.

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Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block as U.S. Delegate to the 22nd FAO Conference, Rome, Italy, Nov. 8.

Mr. Director General, my fellow delegates, and friends.

At the conclusion of the Hot Springs Conference in 1943, the delegates set a challenge for us all. They stated:

"This conference ... declares its belief that the goal of freedom from want of food, suitable and adequate for the strength of all peoples, can be achieved."

That was four decades ago. We have made great progress since then and today we can speak of a world food system. World food production has risen steadily at a rate of 2.6 percent since the 1950's. The best rate of growth—averaging 3 percent a year—has occurred in the developing countries.

Those are heartening statistics, but they do not tell the whole story. They do not show that while per capita food production has risen overall, population growth has held the rate of increase to less than 1 percent annually in developing countries. They do not show that in Africa, food production is actually declining.

Nor do these statistics indicate that nearly 500 million of the world's people are underfed and hungry today, and the sad fact that the hungry are most often children, women, and the very old.

We have not reached our goal of overcoming hunger and malnutrition. All of us here must renew our commitment to reach that goal by the end of this century.

U.S. efforts to improve the world food situation

In my remarks today I will focus first on what the United States is doing to end world food problems. Then I will turn to what I believe other nations and international groups can do in this vital area.

Progress toward our goal of "freedom from want of food" starts, of course, with agriculture. In my country, agriculture is one of our greatest resources. We have shared the benefits of our agriculture with other countries. We have done this in three ways:

First, by promoting freer agricultural trade and striving to be a reliable supplier,

Second, by sharing our agricultural expertise, and

Third, by continuing to be generous in our food aid to those in need.

Food Aid

The United States has shown its concern for hungry people in the developing nations by increasing its food aid.

Last year we raised our pledge to the World Food Program by 14 percent to \$250 million, a new record. At the same time we began a new program to donate government-owned stocks. Donations under this program have already exceeded 83,000 tons.

For nearly three decades we have carried out the biggest food aid program in history—"Food for Peace." We owe a great deal to private voluntary organizations for helping us make this program a success. Aid to developing countries under "Food for Peace" has already surpassed \$40 billion—more than the food aid from all other sources combined.

Sharing Agricultural Expertise

But food aid will not solve the world's food problems. If we are to see an end to hunger, developing nations must grow more food and store and distribute it better. We need to overcome poverty in these nations and help them build their economies.

It is our policy to be totally unselfish in sharing U.S. agricultural expertise with the people of the developing world. We have shared our knowledge through technical assistance, joint research and training.

Today, the United States has technical assistance projects in over 80 countries. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has scientific exchange agreements with 30 countries and we have carried out nearly 2,000 research projects with other nations to curb crop losses and build food output. Working with the Agency for International Development, FAO, and others we have trained over 70,000 agriculturists from other nations at a rate of over 2,000 a year.

Technology has been the primary reason for the tremendous growth in world food output in the last 30 years. The United States and other developed countries must continue to share advances in this area.

Agricultural Trade

Not enough people think of trade in terms of its role in countering hunger. But trade does far more than aid to see to it that millions in food deficit countries are fed.

International trade improves the overall food situation by encouraging each nation to produce those farm products it can grow most economically. The market is the best guarantee of the most effective use of the world's agricultural resources and, therefore, of its food security. But the market must be free to operate and the United States has consistently promoted that principle in world agricultural trade.

Over the years many nations have turned to the United States for their food imports. We remain the world's largest food exporter and continue to hold the largest food reserves so we can be a reliable supplier to all.

At the same time, we have been a good customer for other nations and this has contributed to their economic development. The United States is the best market for developing nations and last year we bought almost \$9.5 billion worth of their agricultural products.

The United States is dedicated to being a reliable supplier to all. But to continue in that role we must maintain the productivity of our farmers. That is why we opted for the payment-in-kind (PIK) program introduced last year.

Excessive supplies, poor prices, and falling incomes were seriously threatening the economic health of our farmers. Farmers cut back by

almost one-fourth and severe drought added unexpectedly to the decline in production.

In spite of this decline in output, you can be certain we will meet foreign demand for our agricultural products and all of our food aid commitments. We are preparing to bring most of the 20 million hectares taken out of production back into production next year. This will ensure that we remain a reliable supplier to meet world needs.

What other Nations can do

A strong U.S. commitment to technical assistance and food aid is essential, but it will not end hunger and malnutrition. The answer to the world's food problems does not lie in the United States. We could not single-handedly feed the world. The answer lies in helping the developing nations strengthen their economies and their agriculture.

This brings us to the issue of what food deficit countries can do to help themselves and what all nations can do collectively. I firmly believe that sound agricultural policies—national and international—are the key to solving world food problems.

I realize that each individual nation is unique. Climates and soils differ. Each nation is unique in its economics, its social structure, and its historical perspective. But we all share the common objective of wanting to assure our citizens of a safe, wholesome and abundant food supply. This, above all else, can determine the strength of any nation—the fate of any government.

If I were to issue any challenge today, that challenge would be for all of our nations to think about what is best for agriculture when we make our policy decisions. I can assure you of this: If we do what is best for agriculture, we will also be doing what is best for our nations as a whole.

Incentives

First and foremost, farmers must have the incentive to produce. Government policies that emphasize industrial over agricultural development will damage a nation's ability to produce food. The same can be said of policies which benefit the consumer at the expense of the farmer.

We have found in the United States that a healthy and productive agriculture will ultimately benefit all sectors of our economy. We have also found that a healthy agriculture is most possible when farmers receive a fair price and the opportunity to profit.

Credit and Capital Investment

Second, farmers must have credit so they can make the capital investments to expand their output. And governments must encourage investment to build adequate storage and transportation facilities so food products can be marketed effectively.

Reserves

Third, all nations in a position to do so should maintain food reserves and the United States is ready to offer technical advice on how to set up sound reserve systems. No one nation should have to bear the major responsibility for ensuring that world reserves are adequate.

Comparative Advantage

Fourth, in planning agricultural development nations must remember the law of comparative advantage. We should not encourage farmers to grow crops they cannot grow economically, or we will waste valuable capital, land and labor.

Trade As A Development Tool

Finally, all nations—and especially the developing ones—would ultimately profit from freer agricultural trade. Trade plays a vital role in development and freer agricultural trade could stimulate economic growth throughout the developing world.

If the level of protectionism in agricultural trade were cut in half, economists estimate that developing nations could build their exchange earnings by \$8.5 billion a year. Even now, developing nations earn 17 times more through trade than they receive as aid. So trade is far more vital to their economies than aid could ever be. This simple fact must be taken into account as we work to foster agriculture in the developing world and to overcome world hunger.

Conclusion

Taking the economic and political steps to promote farming in developing countries and to liberalize agricultural trade will not be easy. Some countries are better equipped to take those steps than others. But all nations must begin, and begin now, if we are to finally eliminate hunger.

All of us can look to the Food and Agriculture Organization as a resource of talent and leadership as we work to solve world food problems. It can and should help formulate national policies and programs the developing nations can use to strengthen their food systems.

FAO has done a great deal already to help the people of the developing world. We commend Director General Saouma for focusing on major priorities and for the reasonable and balanced program of work and budget for 1984/1985. I urge you all to join us in supporting this program and budget.

Finally, the United States recognizes the importance of continued political and financial support for this organization. President Reagan recently reaffirmed our commitment to remain a full and active partner in the United Nations system. We intend to live up to that pledge.

The problems of food and agriculture challenge us today, just as they challenged the men and women who first planned FAO four decades ago. They envisioned a world in which all people would one day be free from hunger. Let us work to make their vision a reality.

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**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block
before the FAO Americans, Rome, Italy, Nov. 9.**

I would like to thank the organizers of this luncheon for bringing all of you together. In the 38 years FAO has been in operation, Americans have played a major role and we can take pride in this organization's success.

As chairman of this year's FAO Conference, I've been listening to quite a few speeches lately. And I have to confess that—regardless of the topic—the short ones always sounded a little better to me. I'll keep that in mind in my talk here today.

One topic has come up repeatedly here in Rome this week. That topic is the question of the United States' political and financial commitment to FAO and other international agencies. As you know there have been some rumblings back in Washington about international organizations. That kind of thing goes on periodically. It's nothing new.

I would like to assure all of you that the Reagan Administration believes the United States must meet its commitments to FAO and the other agencies in the United Nations system. You've already seen evidence of that. FODAG has been upgraded to the level of a mission and the president has appointed a very talented and capable ambassador—Millicent Fenwick. For its part, USDA has a strong interest in FAO and we have our own representative here—George Dietz. I would like to thank George for the fine job he has done on UDDA's behalf.

But let's be frank with one another and recognize there are problems. There is strong resentment toward international organizations in some quarters of the United States. I don't share or agree with that resentment. But a lot of it is quite understandable. We were the major driving force behind the formation of the U.N. system and we've contributed massive amounts of money to sustain that system. Naturally, we are bothered when U.N. agencies are used as forums for anti-Americanism.

But the fact that individual nations have chosen to use U.N. agencies as political vehicles does not undermine the validity of the system as a whole. It just makes it all that much more important that we return to the principles on which FAO and related agencies were founded. That, in essence, was one of the points the president made at the General Assembly in September.

In his speech, President Reagan stated said: "Even though development remains a formidable challenge, we have witnessed remarkable economic growth among industrialized and developing nations. The United Nations and its affiliates have made important

contributions. These broad achievements, however, have been overshadowed by the problems that weigh so heavily upon us. The problems are old, but it is not too late to commit ourselves to a new beginning, a beginning fresh with the ideals of the United Nations charter."

Let me encourage all of you to rededicate yourselves to the ideals upon which FAO was founded—namely to end hunger and malnutrition in the world. We are proud of your efforts here and you can count on us to support you in the future.

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**Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block
before the 20th Anniversary of the World Food Program, Rome, Italy,
Nov. 9.**

It is our pleasure today to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the World Food Program.

When the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations began the World Food Program, they could not have envisioned the great contribution it would make toward strengthening agriculture in the developing world. I am particularly proud that the United States was instrumental in founding this valuable international effort.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the strong support of my government for the World Food Program. Last year we raised our pledge for 1983-84 by 14 percent to a new record of \$250 million. All told, we have donated or pledged more than one and a half billion dollars in food, cash, and services to WFP.

There is tremendous scope to the work WFP has done in agricultural and rural development in the last two decades. And that work has been effective. We have seen efforts in land improvement in Egypt; dairy and livestock production in Africa, India, and Latin America; and a host of projects to build nutrition and literacy among the world's poor.

One of the best features of this program is the way resources are focused on those who are most in need. Over 80 percent of WFP's commitments last year were for development projects in the low-income, food deficit countries. The program wisely devoted half of these resources to sub-Saharan Africa where both food aid and agricultural development are so desperately needed.

In addition to its development activities, WFP has carried out emergency operations in nearly 100 countries to help both political refugees and the victims of earthquakes, floods, droughts and other natural disasters. This work amounted to almost \$200 million last year alone.

President Reagan commented recently on the importance of multilateral efforts to combat hunger. He said, "Traditionally, the United States has been the foremost supporter of multilateral aid ... We make the largest contribution to many organizations concerned with hunger—including the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Program and the international development banks. We were there to help found these organizations and we stand firmly with them today."

There is little I could add to that endorsement. Let me just wish the World Food Program even greater success in the years ahead. The food aid it provides is truly a sound investment in the future of mankind.

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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

SECRETARY BLOCK TO CHAIR FAO CONFERENCE IN ROME

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block will preside as chairman of the 22nd conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The conference begins Nov. 5 in Rome and runs until Nov. 24.

Block also will head the U.S. delegation to the conference. He is scheduled to be in Rome Nov. 4-11 and Nov. 19-25.

Items to be discussed at the conference include the food crisis in Africa, the overall world food situation and FAO's programs and budget for 1984-85. Approximately 150 ministers of agriculture and their respective delegations are expected to attend.

Block will accept the chairmanship of the conference on Nov. 5 and address the conference as the U.S. delegate on Nov. 8. Block also is slated to speak at FAO ceremonies marking the 20th anniversary of the World Food Program and before the Society for International Development while in Rome.

Other members of the U.S. delegation include: Ambassador Millicent Fenwick, U.S. representative to the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture; Under Secretary of Agriculture Daniel G. Amstutz; Donald R. Toussaint, deputy U.S. representative to the U.N. agencies for food and agriculture; Joan S. Wallace, administrator, USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development; and Terry B. Kinney, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

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USDA TO RESUME ECONOMIC EMERGENCY LOAN PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—The U. S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration will resume making economic

emergency loans no later than Dec. 22, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block said today.

The loan program, first authorized in 1978, expired in September 1981.

Complying with a federal district court order issued in September, USDA is reopening the program for both insured and guaranteed loans up to a total of \$600 million. The court order resulted from suits filed by farmers in several states.

The agency, USDA's rural credit arm, makes loans to rural residents and communities unable to obtain adequate credit from private, commercial lenders.

The economic emergency loan program should not be confused with the disaster emergency loan program, which is limited to helping farmers continue their operations after suffering production or physical losses as a result of a natural disaster.

Economic emergency loans are authorized for farmers and ranchers who are primarily and directly engaged in and expect to continue in agricultural production; are unable to get sufficient credit from their regular lenders, and have a need for credit to maintain viable farming operations. The total principal balance outstanding at any time on an economic emergency loan(s) to any one borrower cannot exceed \$400,000.

Those loan funds can be used primarily to finance 1984 crop production; purchase essential livestock, feed and equipment; pay family living and farm production debts that cannot be extended, and pay delinquent installments owed on chattels and farm and home real estate debts when it is determined that the lender is demanding payment of such installments. One nondelinquent installment may be refinanced on farm chattels and real estate debts to give the borrower a better cash flow.

To reopen the program, the Farmers Home Administration must revise, publish and disseminate regulations to replace those that expired in 1981 to its 2,200 field offices.

Interest rates charge for guaranteed economic emergency loans are negotiated by the borrower and lender. For insured loans, the rate is

ties to the cost to the government of borrowing money in the financial markets plus up to 1 percent for servicing and administration.

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USDA HAS NOT APPROVED ADDING OIL OR WATER TO CONTROL DUST IN GRAIN

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has not approved the application of water or oil to grain to control dust, Kenneth A. Gilles, administrator of USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, said today.

Several grain trade newspapers erroneously reported that USDA had verbally approved the addition of a spray of moisture or edible oil to suppress dust when loading or unloading grain, Gilles said.

"USDA authority is limited to certifying the quantity and quality of grain at the time of inspection," Gilles said. "The agency is not authorized to approve or disapprove grain dust suppressants.

"USDA supports efforts by the grain industry and others to develop methods to control grain dust. However, the addition of substances such as water and oil to grain may be considered an adulteration and may affect both the quality and quantity of the commodity," Gilles said.

#

USDA JOINS FIGHT AGAINST FLU IN CHICKENS IN PENNSYLVANIA

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—U.S. Department of Agriculture veterinarians have set up a task force in Harrisburg, Pa., to help stop the spread of avian influenza in Pennsylvania chicken flocks.

"The virus disease of poultry poses a serious threat to the state's \$400 million poultry industry," said Bert Hawkins, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "However, avian influenza does not affect humans."

Hawkins said USDA and Pennsylvania state officials agreed to these points in recent meetings.

— The infected area, plus a buffer zone will be put under federal-state quarantine.

"Pennsylvania has already quarantined infected and suspected flocks," Hawkins said. "We are discussing aspects of the pending federal quarantine with state and industry representatives."

— Disinfection requirements will be established and strictly enforced.

— Disease surveillance will be increased, both within and outside of the infected area.

— USDA will do intensive studies to determine the course of the disease and aid in planning future actions.

When avian influenza was first diagnosed in Lancaster County last April, the disease was not causing significant poultry losses, Hawkins said. Tissue samples containing the virus sent to the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, failed to have any significant effect on disease-free test chickens.

However, this picture changed dramatically in late October when USDA received reports of up to 30 percent losses in newly infected poultry flocks in Lancaster County. Samples sent to Ames from these flocks caused over 75 percent mortality in test chickens, Hawkins said.

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PAYMENT-IN-KIND COTTON DELIVERIES TO BE DELAYED, USDA SAYS

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—Cotton farmers who participated in the 1983 payment in-kind program will receive their entitlements nearly 40 days late, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

C. Hoke Leggett, associate administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said late changes in legislation governing the cotton portion of the PIK program is chiefly responsible for the delays.

He said the ASCS Kansas City Commodity Office plans two mailings of cotton entitlement information to county offices. For counties with entitlement dates of Oct. 1 and earlier, the mailings should be completed by Nov. 7. For counties with an entitlement date of Oct. 15, mailings should be completed by Nov. 22, Leggett said.

The entitlement information includes the number of bales of Commodity Credit Corporation-owned cotton due a PIK participant and its location. This is the cotton a farmer is scheduled to receive under the program from CCC inventories.

However, Leggett said, last summer's drought so greatly reduced crops in some areas that a number of producers may be unable to produce enough cotton to meet the 40 percent "harvest for PIK" provision.

Leggett said ASCS county offices soon will forward information on drought-stricken farmers so USDA then can allocate any additional amount to meet a producer's shortage under harvest for PIK. He said USDA plans to complete this review and start allocating cotton by early next month.

#

USDA ANNOUNCES SALES POLICY FOR 1983-85 CROPS OF LOAN PEANUTS

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's domestic crushing and export sales policy for 1982-crop loan peanuts will remain unchanged for 1983 through 1985 crops placed under loan, according to C. Hoke Leggett, vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

Loan collateral quota and additional peanuts from the 1983-85 crops will be sold for export crushing at no less than the support level, plus cost. Additional peanuts sold for export crushing must be fragmented before export to prevent them from entering edible markets, Leggett said.

CCC will sell quota and additional peanuts from the 1983-85 crops for domestic crushing at competitive prices. The use of the oil produced from these peanuts will be unrestricted with one exception: the oil may

not be exported to a country involved in a U.S. trade suspension.

Separate determinations issued by the agency cover the CCC domestic edible sales policy and the minimum export edible sales price for additional loan peanuts.

The sales policy adopted for the 1983-85 crops is the same policy which was applicable to the 1982 crop.

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U.S. RESPONDS TO AFRICAN FOOD CRISIS

ROME, ITALY, Nov. 8—The United States is increasing by \$25 million this year's emergency food assistance to drought-stricken Africa, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block announced today during the fourth day of the Food and Agricultural Organization's Conference.

This will bring total U.S. emergency food relief to Africa thus far to meet this emergency situation to \$50 million, Block said.

"The United States government is very concerned about the suffering caused by the current food crisis in Africa," Block said. "This additional aid is in response to the immediate needs. At the same time, it is important to look to the future. This is why we also are providing another \$300 million in economic assistance for rural and agricultural development."

Combined with the ongoing P.L. 480 food aid support, which will be more than \$200 million this year to Africa, total U.S. food and agricultural aid for Africa this year will exceed \$500 million.

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USDA DECLARES 'EXTRAORDINARY EMERGENCY' TO COMBAT CHICKEN FLU IN PENNSYLVANIA

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9—An "extraordinary emergency" has been declared by Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng to counteract an outbreak of avian influenza in Pennsylvania.

"This action will make federal funds and personnel available to combat this disease," Lyng said. "It also enables USDA to pay up to 100 percent indemnities for poultry destroyed because of the disease."

"Consumers need not be concerned," Lyng said, "because avian influenza does not affect humans. Moreover, we do not expect any shortages or effect on poultry or egg prices."

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture have set up a joint task force in Lancaster, Pa., to combat the disease.

Although the outbreak has been confined by cooperative federal-state quarantines to a 1,125-square-mile area, Lyng said prompt action was needed to complete safeguarding the nation's \$9.6 billion poultry industry.

Cooperative federal-state quarantines were put on portions of four Pennsylvania counties—Berks, Dauphin, Lancaster and Lebanon—Nov. 4 as part of the effort to contain the disease.

A permit system was subsequently established throughout the quarantined area to provide safeguards to move poultry and poultry products to market in an orderly fashion.

The amended regulations allow uninfected and unexposed poultry to move from the quarantined area interstate under permit if they have been inspected, are healthy and are shipped to federally inspected slaughter plants.

Table eggs from such flocks may be shipped under permit after they have been cleaned and sanitized. Shipments must be in flats or cases that are new or cleaned and disinfected according to federal standards.

Hatching eggs require additional precautions. These include a requirement that they be held for five days before shipping to assure that the breeding flock is disease-free. They must also be fumigated and shipped under specified conditions.

Used poultry coops, containers, troughs or other accessories for handling poultry and eggs may be moved under permit if they are cleaned and disinfected under federal requirements.

The quarantined area is bounded on the west by the Susquehanna River, on the north by Interstate Highways 81 and 78, on the east by state Route 61 and U.S. Route 222 and on the south by U.S. Route 30.

When avian influenza was first diagnosed in Lancaster County last April, the disease did not cause significant losses in either poultry or in disease-free test chickens. But this picture changed dramatically in late October when USDA received reports of up to 30 percent losses in newly infected poultry flocks in Lancaster County and over 75-percent mortality in test chickens.

"Pennsylvania has been extremely cooperative in contributing trained personnel, equipment and facilities to the eradication effort," Lyng said. "At the same time, the poultry industry has also been an eager participant, providing specialists and expertise that has significantly hastened our reaction time."

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